



**GAIL FARBER**  
Director of Public Works

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## AVIATION COMMISSION

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

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### LOS ANGELES COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

**March 28, 2012, Meeting**  
**General Wm. J. Fox Airfield**  
**4555 West Avenue G**  
**Lancaster, CA 93536-8401**  
**(661) 940-1790**

## COMMISSIONERS

**CLINTON SIMMONS**  
CHAIRMAN

**DENNIS C. LORD**  
VICE CHAIRMAN

**PETER AMUNDSON**  
SECRETARY

**GEORGE G. BUTTS**  
MEMBER

**ANGELO R. CARDONO**  
MEMBER

**BOBBY E. CHASE**  
MEMBER

**PENELOPE CORNWALL**  
MEMBER

**HARVEY HOLLOWAY**  
MEMBER

**ARON A. WOLF**  
MEMBER

**VACANT**  
MEMBER

### IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Clinton Simmons  
Vice Chairman Dennis C. Lord  
Secretary Peter M. Amundson  
Commissioner Bobby E. Chase  
Commissioner Harvey A. Holloway

### OFFICIALLY EXCUSED

Commissioner George G. Butts  
Commissioner Angelo R. Cardono  
Commissioner Penelope Cornwall  
Commissioner Aron A. Wolf

### COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS STAFF

Mr. Dennis Hunter, Deputy Director  
Mr. Richard L. Smith, Chief, Aviation Division  
Mr. Aaron Walsh, Airport Project Coordinator

### AMERICAN AIRPORTS CORPORATION - AIRPORT SERVICES DIVISION STAFF

Mr. Scott Wardle, Regional Director  
Mr. Chris Brooks, Manager, El Monte Airport  
Mr. Rafael Herrera, Manager, Compton/Woodley Airport  
Mr. Steve Irving, Manager, General Wm. J. Fox Airfield  
Mr. Andrew Marino, Manager, Whiteman Airport  
Mr. Cyle Woodruff, Manager, Brackett Field Airport

### GUESTS

Mr. Don Hagopian, Whiteman Airport Association  
Mrs. Shellie Hagopian, Whiteman Airport Association  
Ms. Marisa Iadevaia, Rocky's Restaurant  
Mr. John Michael Lee, Whiteman Airport  
Mr. Bill Logan, Whiteman Airport  
Mr. George Prewitt, General Wm. J. Fox Airfield Association  
Mr. Tom Lowry, General Wm. J. Fox Airfield

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Simmons called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Simmons led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **I. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**

### **A. February 29, 2012, Minutes**

The minutes were unanimously carried and approved.

### **B. American Airports Corporation - Project Manager Report**

Mr. Wardle reported that there were 111 hangar vacancies across the five airports. He also reported that the airports are in good shape as far as making it a couple of months without having to raise the price on fuel. Brackett and Whiteman have less storage capacity and have had to raise price due to purchasing fuel at a higher rate. Mr. Wardle then deferred to the airport managers for their individual reports.

#### **Mr. Andrew Marino reported on Whiteman Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

Mr. Marino had the street lights rewired in their parking lot, so they are all working properly. Airport staff has completely rebuilt the sprayer that they use for weed abatement.

- **Projects**

The Aviation Division's ramp project is proceeding ahead of schedule. All of the paving work was completed last week and only the tie-down installations and striping was needed.

The Aviation Division will be queuing up the slurry project when the current ramp project is complete. Planning details are being worked out. Mr. Marino stated that he is in the process of preparing notification letters to the tenants that will be affected by the project. It is anticipated that approximately 100 airplanes will have to be moved.

- **Development and Activities**

Avgas sales were down 3.6 percent and Jet-A was up 28 percent compared to the same period last year. Total airport operations were flat. Hangar occupancy was reportedly at 87 percent.

- **Meetings and Events**

Aviation Explorers/Ninety-Nines/EAA had their pancake breakfast last weekend. The next Airport Association meeting will be April 19th.

**Mr. Cyle Woodruff reported on Brackett Field Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

The motor on an Avgas dispenser at the fuel pit was replaced but no interruption of fuel sales occurred.

Airport staff has been actively replacing light bulbs and ballast on several fixtures around the airport.

- **Projects**

Mr. Woodruff reported that a letter of agreement from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) was still needed before the Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) at the airport could be commissioned.

- **Development and Activities**

Commercial space at the airport was completely occupied. Mr. Woodruff mentioned that there were 34 hangar vacancies. He also indicated that with caveat that eight of those hangars did not have power and so was less desirable to potential tenants.

Total fuel sales saw a 6 percent drop in Jet-A and Avgas went up about 2 percent last month.

- **Meetings and Events**

The Brackett Airport Association meeting will be on the first Thursday of the month. The Aircraft Display day will occur on the third Sunday of the month.

- **Miscellaneous**

Mr. Woodruff put out a request in the airport newsletter for anyone who possessed historical Brackett Field Airport photos and was interested in voluntarily submitting them so they could be included in an airport archive/exhibit to come forward. Several tenants responded and one in particular had many photos dating back to the inception of the airport and donated them to the airport. These photos were impressive and captured a time when Brackett Field Airport was only a dirt strip, according to Mr. Woodruff. Mr. Woodruff also shared that he has since had some of

the photos enlarged and framed. It is hoped that the photos will be displayed in the terminal building in the coming months.

#### **Mr. Chris Brooks reported on El Monte Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

The airport staff is proceeding with roof repairs on several hangars that were leaking after the last rain event.

Repairs were also made to several taxiway delineators and a runway end identifier light.

Other standard maintenance to the airport and equipment continues month-to-month.

- **Development and Activities**

Hangar occupancy was at 93 percent with 25 percent of that being non-aviation use. Total operations were down about 8 percent compared to the same period last year.

Jet-A sales showed no change from the same period last year and Avgas was not much better than that.

- **Meetings and Events**

A flight instructor clinic will be held on April 9th at Los Angeles Flight Center. The San Gabriel Valley Airport Association will be holding their meeting on April 19th.

#### **Mr. Rafael Herrera reported on Compton/Woodley Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

The interior of the north pilot lounge was repainted. Airport staff also spent a good deal of time preparing and repainting the waste oil station, which significantly cleaned up the appearance.

- **Projects**

Mr. Herrera reported that the hangar lighting project will be commencing shortly along with the project to repair the stair cases between three of the commercial hangars.

- **Development and Activities**

98 percent of the hangars were currently occupied.

Chairman Simmons inquired on whether there was any increased hangar usage on the north side to which Mr. Herrera affirmed. Vice Chairman Lord followed up on a derelict aircraft issue at the airport. Mr. Wardle explained that the aircraft will be parked with some other derelict aircraft on the north side the following week.

Vice Chairman Lord inquired as to whether there was going to be an Air Fair again this year. Mr. Herrera had nothing new to report on the issue.

- **Miscellaneous**

There was an aircraft mishap at the airport since the last meeting. A Piper Cub flipped over after engine start up. The accident occurred near the tie-down row on the north side and was reported to the National Transportation Safety Board. The owner removed it from the airport the next day. No injuries were reported.

**Mr. Steve Irving reported on General Wm J. Fox Airfield events**

- **Projects**

Mr. Irving reported that the Aviation Division is working on the HVAC system replacement and has been providing his office with assistance and guidance as the project moves through the process. The information was sent out to a few companies to seek bids on the job.

- **Miscellaneous**

The local news reported that the City of Lancaster has implemented a program to have a law enforcement aircraft patrol their skies on a daily basis. The aircraft is expected to be based out of Fox Airfield.

The airport had a notable visit from a Grumman Goose. The twin Engine amphibious airplane dates back to the 1940's and received a lot of attention when it arrived. Rides were given to several of those who ventured out to see the airplane. The airplane itself had been under a total restoration at the local Palmdale Plant Number 42 where a number of the local residents work. The airplane did not actually make its debut for the local press until it arrived at General Wm. J. Fox Airfield this month.

- **Meetings and Events**

September first is the annual fly-in.

## **C. County Contract Administrator's Report – Mr. Richard Smith**

- **Expense and Revenue Report for September 2012**

Mr. Smith provided the Commission with copies of the revenue and expense report and offered to answer any questions. Chairman Simmons did inquire as to whether the annual flood maintenance line item covered all five airports or not and asked for details on the annual memberships expense. Mr. Smith explained that the flood maintenance included weed abatement programs that could be for any of the five airports, such as the case with the El Monte Airport crack fill project. Annual memberships include the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) Contract Tower Association, which represents our interests in Washington D.C. and encompasses the largest fee of \$2,100. There are also a few smaller professional memberships that the Aviation Division subscribes to.

- **United States Contract Tower Association Program**

As previously reported, a lot of issues were being worked out with federal funding of the entire contract tower program. Mr. Smith thanked Chairman Simmons for assisting with the annual letters that went out to Senators and Congressional Representatives supporting continued funding of this program. It is hoped that these letters will assist the program for many years to come.

- **Compton/Woodley Airport Projects Update**

The notice to proceed was given to the contractor who will be replacing the staircase at one of the commercial hangars. The project has a 30-day completion requirement and work is scheduled to begin April 1st. Aviation Division is also working on painting a row of general aviation hangars at Compton/Woodley Airport. Plans to do the same at Brackett Field will follow.

- **Planning and Design Engineering Contract**

Mr. Smith advised the Commission that the Aviation Division now has a multi-year contract for Engineering and Planning services. Obtaining these services at this point turned out to be perfectly timed with the passing of the FAA reauthorization bill. This will result in speeding up the design process for projects that the division will be working on over the 3-year time frame. In-house projects, such as slurry or crack seals will also utilize the planning and design engineering services. These costs will begin to appear on the revenue and expense report in the coming months, according to Mr. Smith.

- **General William J. Fox Airfield Projects Update**

The Airport Layout Plan at Fox Airfield has depicted the anticipated acquisition of the 80 acres adjacent to the airport for many years. A 10-acre portion of that property had recently come up for sale and the Aviation Division has completed an appraisal on the property. The property was valued at \$112,000. This figure is what the Aviation Division would be obligated to pay but unfortunately the asking price from the seller was still much higher. Aviation Division will continue its efforts in the purchase of those parcels.

The General Wm. J. Fox Airfield Master Plan itself has been in the hands of the consultant who is incorporating minor changes to the preferred alternative development plans that came out of the last public advisory meeting. A representative from the County Supervisor's Office attended that meeting and was encouraged by what he saw as far as the overall outlook for the airport and the way the planning process was going.

- **Whiteman Airport Projects Update**

Ancillary items still needed to be completed for the Whiteman Airport ramp project. These items included raising the manhole covers and drainage boxes up to grade and installing ramp lighting fixtures. The project is on budget and ahead of schedule.

Last month, the Commission was briefed on the status of the Whiteman Airport Master Plan. County Counsel has provided their comments for the Mitigated Negative Declaration so the plan is back with the consultant who is reworking the initial study.

- **Annual Customer Service Survey for the Los Angeles County Airports**

The survey period will be during the month of May. Survey forms will be mailed to airport tenants and will also be available on line.

- **Restaurant at Whiteman Airport**

Chairman Simmons inquired on the status of the closure of the Whiteman Airport restaurant since the discussion during last month's Commission meeting. Mr. Smith advised the Commission that the process is still moving forward. There were still active conversations going on as recent as yesterday, Mr. Smith said.

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENT – OPEN FORUM**

- 1) Mr. Bill Logan passed out some handouts to the commission including a part of the contract between the County and the original contractor hired to manage the airports and the County code pertaining to the airports. He pointed out that the County is responsible for managing the airports and that the Commission is the liaison to the public. Mr. Logan said that he feels it is in the Commission's authority to make a decision on whether Rocky's Restaurant owner at Whiteman Airport can remain or would have to vacate the airport. Chairman Simmons reminded Mr. Logan that the Commission discussed this last meeting and that they have resolved the issue. Mr. Logan referred to the handouts again and said that the contract named Comarco as the contractor and there was nothing about American Airports that says they can advise the Commission on any issue without first clearing it through the County. Mr. Smith stated that the understanding Mr. Logan had regarding the relationship between the County and American Airports was not complete and that he would be happy to brief Mr. Logan about it further at another time. Mr. Smith then advised the Commission that the communication between the American Airports and the Aviation Division is continuous and that they routinely exchange information regarding property management activities. The idea that decisions to evict tenants might be done without the knowledge of the County is not accurate, he explained.
- 2) Marisa Iadevaia introduced herself as the owner of Rocky's Restaurant and began her address by stating that she did try to arrange a meeting with the Supervisor's Office but that they were still working out a time. Ms. Iadevaia claimed that the rent has tripled over the years and she would just like to meet and go over what is needed from her. Chairman Simmons urged Ms. Iadevaia to meet with Mr. Smith to go over these issues and explained that it would be a better way to come to a solution rather than to try in an open forum such as this. Mr. Smith then responded to a question Commissioner Holloway posed about the original reasoning for the lease termination and stated that the restaurant has been operating on a month-to-month basis and that a new longer term lease for the space was desirable. He further explained that this would also provide the opportunity to address the numerous comments from restaurant users by remodeling the space and incorporating a different restaurant model that does not include alcohol sales. Mr. Smith stated that the current goal is to minimize the gap in service when the remodel actually takes place. Commissioner Holloway also recommended that Ms. Iadevaia meet with Mr. Smith to better understand what the Aviation Division expected from her and to get an idea of the timetable she has. Mr. Wardle added a comment and explained that the lease has been on a month-to-month basis since 2008 and that there will be an open bidding process for a restaurant after the improvements have been made. Ms. Iadevaia would be eligible to participate in the bidding process.



- 3) Mr. John Michael Lee was a former tenant of Whiteman Airport, a former attorney for the County of Los Angeles Public Defender's Office and is still a member of the Airport Association. He attended the meeting in a show of support of the restaurant and because of his concern for its future. Though he emphasized that he was not acting in the capacity of an attorney he did want to share that he did not see the process needed to move forward with a lease termination. He said that there has to be transparency through the process and the restaurant owner has made some improvements, which will become a lost investment. Chairman Simmons advised Mr. Lee that this is why the Commission came to the decisions it had during the last meeting and that this is not the appropriate forum for this kind of discussion. Mr. Lee said he understood this but that there should have been certain parameters and goals laid out. What he observed was that the termination was just being thrown down with only a 30-day notice. Mr. Lee says he is not looking at this as a lawyer but just as a tenant and he does not want to see the restaurant close. Its presence adds to the airport's uniqueness and he does not want to see that destroyed.

### **III. OTHER ITEMS**

Commissioner Amundson requested a copy of the contract between American Airports and the County.

### **IV. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE ON:**

**Wednesday, April 25, 2012, 10 a.m.  
Whiteman Airport  
12653 Osborne Street  
Pacoima, CA 91331-2104  
(818) 896-5271**

Chairman Simmons adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clinton Simmons, Chairman  
Los Angeles County Aviation Commission